

November 11, 2004

Mr. L. M. Stinson
Vice President - Farley Project
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

SUBJECT: JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 RE: CLARIFICATION
OF SAFETY EVALUATION (TAC NOS. MC0625 AND MC0626)

Dear Mr. Stinson:

By letter dated September 30, 2004, (Agencywide Documents Access and Management Systems ML042820368) the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff issued Amendment No. 165 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-2 and Amendment No. 157 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-8 for the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2. The amendments consisted of changes to the Technical Specification Limiting Condition of Operation 3.9.3, "Containment Penetrations," to allow the containment equipment hatch to be open during core alterations and/or during movement of irradiated fuel assemblies. Subsequently, your staff identified statements within the safety evaluation (SE) that are misleading.

For instance, on page 8 of the SE, the NRC staff states:

In addition, the licensee proposed adding SR [surveillance requirement] 3.9.3.3. This SR would require that the licensee verify the capability to install the open equipment hatch every 7 days. The NRC staff finds that this surveillance and its associated period would verify that the assumptions for a 1 hour containment equipment hatch closure remain valid.

Furthermore, in other locations within the SE, the NRC staff implies that plant personnel could close the equipment hatch within 1 hour. However, during its evaluation of the amendment request, it was the NRC staff's understanding that, in the event of a fuel-handling accident (FHA) inside containment, the licensee will pursue timely closure of the equipment hatch. Consistent with the licensee's dose analysis, individuals in the containment closure crew will limit their exposure time to no more than 1 hour while closing the hatch, and the closure can be completed within 2 hours of the FHA to provide defense in depth.

L. Stinson

- 2 -

We regret any inconvenience these statements may have caused.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Sean E. Peters, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-348 and 50-364

cc: See next page

L. Stinson

- 2 -

We regret any inconvenience these statements may have caused.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Sean E. Peters, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-348 and 50-364

cc: See next page

DISTRIBUTION:

PUBLIC

PDII-1 R/F

MRoss-Lee

DClarke

SPeters

OGC

ACRS

Ghill (4)

BBonser, RII

DLPM DPR

ADAMS Accession Number: ML043060393

OFFICE	PDII-1/PM	PDII-1/LA (A)	OGC	PDII-1/SC (A)
NAME	SPeters	DClarke	DFruchter	MRoss-Lee
DATE	11/02/04	11/02/04	11/09/04	11/11/04

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 & 2

cc:

Mr. J. R. Johnson
General Manager
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 470
Ashford, AL 36312

William D. Oldfield
SAER Supervisor
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 470
Ashford, AL 36312

Mr. B. D. McKinney, Licensing Manager
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

Mr. M. Stanford Blanton
Balch and Bingham Law Firm
P.O. Box 306
1710 Sixth Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35201

Mr. J. Gasser
Executive Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201

State Health Officer
Alabama Department of Public Health
434 Monroe St.
Montgomery, AL 36130-1701

Chairman
Houston County Commission
P.O. Box 6406
Dothan, AL 36302

Resident Inspector
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
7388 N. State Highway 95
Columbia, AL 36319